



## Illinois Department of Natural Resources

One Natural Resources Way Springfield, Illinois 62702-1271  
<http://dnr.state.il.us>

Pat Quinn, Governor  
Marc Miller, Director

November 10, 2009

Mr. Ron Polka  
Monroe County Highway Department  
100 S. Main Street, Room 16  
Waterloo, IL 62298-1322

**Re: Monroe City Creek Stream Bank Maintenance Project, Valmeyer  
Endangered Species Consultation Program  
Project Number: 1002271  
County: Monroe**

Dear Mr. Polka:

This letter concerns the above-referenced project submitted for consultation in accordance with the *Illinois Endangered Species Protection Act* and the *Illinois Natural Areas Preservation Act*. As stated previously, the protected resources in the vicinity of this project include Monroe City Hill Prairie Illinois Natural Area Inventory (INAI) Site, the Columbia Quarry – White Rock Land and Water Reserve (LWR), the State-listed endangered Great Plains Ratsnake, *Elaphe emoryi*, and the State-listed threatened Timber Rattlesnake, *Crotalus horridus*, and Flathead Snake, *Tantilla gracilis*.

The project involves tree and brush clearing and siltation removal along a leveed creek to restore flow capacity to Monroe City Creek. Work will be located four miles south of Valmeyer along Bluff Road and is linear in nature (+/- 4,700'). The Department has completed its review of the information submitted and has determined that the action is not likely to have an adverse impact on the INAI or LWR. The action is not likely to have an adverse impact on the listed species as long as the project timeframe is limited to between November 1, 2009 and March 15, 2010 - which coincides with when these snakes are hibernating in the bluffs located east of the project footprint.

However, the Department offers the following comments in regards to the project and the County's response dated October 28, 2009.

1. If the project timeframe is extended and moves beyond March 2010, it should be resubmitted for endangered species consultation. These snake species will be in the initial stages of coming out of hibernation/dormancy during the spring; the Timber Rattlesnake and the Great Plains Ratsnake could travel west into the bottomland fields to forage on rodents during the summer months and be adversely impacted by this project if it continues into the spring and summer months.
2. Although not listed on the EcoCAT report because their records are just outside of buffer parameters set within EcoCAT, the State-listed threatened Illinois Chorus Frog, *Pseudacris streckeri*, and the Eastern Narrowmouth Toad, *Gastrophryne carolinensis*, could be within the vicinity of this project. In order for this project to occur without any negative impacts to either

species, the work should be done during their dormant period, that also being November 1st through March 15<sup>th</sup>.

3. As stated in your response letter, the IDOT bridge project that was located at the northerly limits of this project did not present snakes as an issue. This is because the three snake records involved in this consultation are from 2008, according to the natural heritage database, and thus would not have showed as present in the IDOT consultation.
4. As stated in the USACOE letter you attached, the Corps determined that the activity will have no affect on endangered species; the Corps was involved in Section 7 Consultation via the US Fish & Wildlife Service, which involves federal listed species, not state-listed species. This consultation did not flag any federally endangered or threatened listed species.

Consultation on the part of the Department is completed. This consultation is valid for two years unless new information becomes available that was not previously considered, the proposed action is modified, or additional species, essential habitat, or Natural Areas are identified in the vicinity. If the project has not been implemented within two years of the date of this letter, or any of the above listed conditions develop, a new consultation is necessary.

The natural resource review reflects the information existing in the Illinois Natural Heritage Database at the time of the project submittal, and should not be regarded as a final statement on the site being considered, nor should it be a substitute for detailed site surveys or field surveys required for environmental assessments. If additional protected resources are encountered during the project's implementation, you must comply with the applicable statues and regulations. Also, note that termination does not imply IDNR's authorization or endorsement of the proposed action.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact me a call at the number below.

Cordially,

Kathi Davis  
Impact Assessment Section  
Division of Ecosystems and Environment  
Office of Realty and Environmental Planning  
217-557-0483

Cc: Debbie Newman, Illinois Nature Preserves Commission  
Marty Kemper, IDNR/Region IV/Natural Heritage  
Scott Ballard, IDNR/Region V/Natural Heritage  
Jerry Bishop, IDNR/Office of Water Resources